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Orion, Pontera announce expanded integration to help with held-away assets

By Rob Burgess
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Fintechs Pontera and Orion have announced a new integration to better facilitate portfolio rebalancing.

Advisors using Orion Trading can now connect directly into Pontera to integrate clients' 401(k)s, 403(b)s and other held-away accounts.

The offering represents an expansion of the partnership between the two firms. Pontera, known as FeeX until a 2022 rebrand, and Orion announced their first integration in April 2021.

Joe Giannone, communications director at Pontera, said this latest iteration, developed over the past few months, "enables an improved service to both advisors managing these accounts and to clients that are receiving the help they need to grow their retirement savings."

"Advisors using both platforms have a more complete view of the clients' holdings across qualified and nonqualified accounts," he told Financial Planning.

"This expanded integration with Orion is the first of its kind in our industry, designed to simplify and elevate portfolio management for firms focused on delivering bespoke investment solutions," David Goldman, Pontera's chief business officer, said in a statement.

Advisors appreciate streamlined solutions

Noah Damsky, principal at Marina Wealth Advisors in Los Angeles, said his firm uses both Orion and Pontera. He said he expects this integration will streamline portfolio management for advisors, enhancing the process for managing held-away accounts.

"My experience with both has been great so far, and this should only improve that going forward," he said.

Jason Gilbert, founder and managing partner of RGA Investment Advisors in Great Neck, New York, said his firm uses Pontera and finds it to be a helpful tool for managing held-away assets as part of a holistic financial plan. While his firm uses Advyzon rather than Orion, he said he's seen similar integrations enhance efficiency and the level of service firms can provide to clients.

"This latest integration with Orion reflects the broader industry push toward more seamless and scalable solutions for advisors to manage retirement assets

more comprehensively," he said.

This recent integration is expected to be rolled out in phases and will be available more broadly later this year.

Giannone said that while the company "doesn't disclose details" about its business relationships, Pontera partners with Fortune 500 financial firms and supports thousands of advisory firms and their clients.

Since 2021, Pontera has announced more than 30 advisory firm partnerships and more than 15 integrations with third-party technology solutions. Pontera charges a flat, annual fee based on platform assets, Giannone said.

Business model under scrutiny

Pontera's business model has come under scrutiny over the past few years. As CityWire first reported in late 2023, Washington State sent warnings to advisors using Pontera, saying the shared login credentials it uses are a potential cybersecurity threat. Missouri followed suit a few months later.

In 2023 Fidelity announced it would limit screen scraping (when a third-party accesses user account data via shared login credentials). And in September 2024, Fidelity announced it would further limit third-party fintech firms, like Pontera, that rely on credential sharing.

Giannone said data security is a "key focus" at Pontera, as it maintains ISO 27001 and SOC II Type 2 certifications and "undergo robust due diligence by the advisory firms and partners using our technology."

"Pontera continues to grow, pursue new business opportunities and add talent," he said. "Our focus as always is on building better experiences for all stakeholders, from advisors and their clients to plan providers and sponsors."